

## USE OF ONLINE MESSAGING TO FACILITATE SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS IN GAME PLAY

### Abstract of the Disclosure

5 A method and system facilitating selection of participants in multiplayer  
online electronic games. The method provides an efficient procedure for players to  
host and join new instances of multiplayer online electronic games, as well as  
providing a scheme that enables players to join multiplayer online electronic games  
that are already in progress. The method is implemented through a gaming utility  
that runs on each player's electronic device (e.g. PC) and interacts behind the scenes  
10 with an online messaging service. Player hosts are enabled to select players from a  
list of contacts provided by the online messaging service who they want to invite to  
join a chat session. A selected multiplayer online electronic game is selectively  
launched on all of the player's computers through a single command issued by the  
host. Additionally, the gaming utility provides players with a list of existing chat  
15 sessions being hosted by other players so as to enable the players to join multiplayer  
online electronic games that are already in progress. The system includes a plurality  
of electronic devices linked in communication across a communications network,  
such as a LAN or the Internet. Each electronic device is operatively coupled to a  
headset having a pair of headphones and a microphone. The headset is worn by a  
20 player, enabling the players to verbally communicate with others in a verbal chat  
session.